

Political foes punished

It's not often the Emerald agrees with Rep. Roger Martin, R-Lake Oswego. However, Martin's criticisms of House Speaker Phil Lang's, D-Portland, committee assignments are right on the mark.

Under Oregon's legislative power structure, the leaders of the two chambers have complete control over who is appointed to what committee, as well as what position the legislator will have on that committee. It's a system that's open to abuse, and Lang, along with his Senate counterpart Jason Boe, D-Reedsport, abused it about as much as is possible.

Lang and Boe both faced challenges in their efforts to win re-election to their positions. Lang was challenged by a faction in his own party as well as a near-successful coalition attempt to elect Rep. Dick Magruder, D-Clatskanie, Speaker. Boe faced similar challenges in the Senate from urban liberals unhappy with his friendships with rural legislators.

A quick rundown of Lang and Boe's final committee assignments reads like a roster of who supported them and who didn't. Those who did were rewarded, and those that didn't got the shaft.

A case in point is Eugene Democrat Gratten Kerans.

Kerans has spent the last three years intensely studying Oregon's tax structure. As a member of the revenue committee two years ago, he attended a hell of a lot of 3:30 a.m. meetings and emerged from the session with a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of our system of raising funds.

However, Kerans caused Lang a lot of grief last year, and this year supported Lang's opponent within the Democratic Caucus. As a result, the people of Oregon won't benefit from Kerans' knowledge of the tax system; he wasn't reappointed to the revenue committee. Wednesday, the Register-Guard shrugged this political vindictiveness off as part "of a tough game." But it's not a game.

During this biennium the state of Oregon will spend close to 2 billion dollars. The Legislature will decide where that money goes, and the real power of the Legislature lies in its committees. Given this, committee assignments should be made on the basis of expertise and interest, not on the basis of who a legislator supported for speaker or president.

For Boe and Lang to use their positions to punish enemies or further their own political careers is a violation of the public trust. Rather than be passed over as part of the political process, these actions should be pointed at and yelled about.

This session's committee appointments are persuasive arguments for revamping the way power is meted out at the Legislature. Legislators should give serious consideration to taking away some of the absolute power now vested in the leadership's offices. No longer should two people's political ambition or grudges be the criteria for who runs the state.

Review 407 designation

Many of the most interesting courses offered by the University are those designated "407" in the time schedule. Unfortunately, 407 courses do not count toward fulfillment of the University's general requirements for graduation.

The 407 designation is supposed to mean "seminar." However, 407 courses are often indistinguishable from other courses, having the same format, prerequisites, work load, scope of content and class size. Instead of meaning "seminar," the 407 designation has come to mean "this course is a little unconventional."

The reason 407 courses are not counted toward graduation is that the University wants its graduates to leave school with a broad liberal education. This is a proper aim, and its importance should not be slighted.

But if the number 407 beside a course listing is supposed to mean the course is a seminar, students should not find themselves in a lecture class after enrolling. Also, the criteria employed by different departments in labeling courses 407 appears to vary. The 407 designation is ambiguous and sometimes misleading.

There's nothing wrong with excluding certain courses from the list of those that will satisfy general University requirements. But the 407 designation is such a catch-all that in some cases students' prerogatives in planning their educations are unfairly limited. Departmental course listings should be reviewed and some measure of meaning restored to the course numbering system.

Duck Soup

Oregon Daily Emerald



"BANZAI!"

Letters

Bar discriminates

The Emerald's January 5 article publicizing De Frisco's bar notes the place has class. The question remains — which class? Meigs' nostalgia for a long-dead grandfather bothers us. "Honest" Henry made his imperialist fortune in Chilean railroad speculations, but at least he spent it honestly on lavish parties. Meigs charges people for his food and booze and music and discount-house antique furnishings. Meigs heart lies not in the pleasure but in the cash payment.

His policy of harassing gay men and lesbians at the bar, because they might frighten away business, reveals the lack of human warmth in Meigs' establishment. "Boogie . . . no bumping", despite the bad syntax, clearly tells gay people to keep out, or at least don't touch each other sensuously in public. But Eugene gay people are not going to passively accept discrimination in public places.

We also criticize the inconsistency of the Emerald's editorial policy. The Emerald has conscientiously reported the civil liberties struggles of gay people in this community, including the struggle against De Frisco's. We object to your decision to publish a promotion, masked as news, for a reactionary small businessman.

Steven Roper
Senior — History
for Stonewall Day Union

Self-contradiction

The Wednesday, Jan. 12 edition of the ODE considerably brightened my morning masochism, otherwise known as breakfast in the dorms. Ms. Tabor's account of Dave Tyler's sophomore position on the UFW and the ASUO TV series transformed the day into a renewal of old acquaintances.

First off, it seems to me that an impartial panel on the UFW issue would be quite droll, uninformative, and wouldn't attract many student viewers. I would like to see a panel consisting of "partial" representatives from each side of the issue. This kind of information exchange is what people need in order to make intelligent decisions. Surely Dave, you would not be one to inhibit democracy, would you?

Tyler's statement on the intelligence of the ASUO's running of an ad on Friday puts him in a position of self-contradiction. Dave's

complaint that ASUO support for the UFW was hidden from the IFC contains the idea that the ASUO position should have been made known then, as if it hadn't already, is contradicted by his quip on ASUO intelligence in that the ASUO, by waiting for the time limit on reconsideration to expire, could have taken this molehill out of public debate. Well Dave, which is it, Public debate or Nixon politics?

Janet Eggleston's open-mouth-insert-other-foot act is certainly the best I've seen this year. Her astute commentary on Tyler's motion for reconsideration (it's "a lot of crap") and the IFC's nature and effectiveness ("We're just playing at student government anyway. Just look at the power we have.") shows she understands the Catch 22 she and her comrades are in.

I wish I could see the circus at tonight's IFC meeting.

Paul Lemman
Sophomore — Political Science

Dangerous errors

Now that the weather's gone warm and wet from last week's cold, so also has the article on mushrooms in last week's ODE gone from uninformed, neophyte journalism to irresponsible and dangerous journalism.

The mysterious "expert" quoted in the article makes enough general mycological errors (90 per cent of high mountain mushrooms are poisonous, Psilocybe Semilanceata can be found in forests, etc.) to make him a suspect, big-bucks-from-others' ignorance artist. No problem there. He's got a good future in used cars if his mushroom thing doesn't work out.

The real danger is the article and the photo with it. The description of P. Semilanceata in the arti-

cle is vague enough but combined with the photo (probably a thoroughly edible honey mushroom) it becomes dangerous. Here's why: the fuzzy photo shows spots on the cap (good God, even the Register Guard had the good sense to put a picture of the mushroom which was the subject of its article!) and if a student went off to the woods clutching your photo he would either find the honey mushroom which would taste good but wouldn't get him high, or he would find the great dissembler of the mushroom realm, members of the Amanita family.

These have many forms and colors but almost always in some stage have what resembles spots on the caps. The Amanita family has common names like "death angel", "destroying angel" and poisonous one thing and another. So definitely not good for you that even with medical attention you're given only a 50-50 chance of surviving. So, following your article an initiate to the mushroom kingdom would get either fed or dead. This time of the year the odds are something like 100 to 1 for the latter.

Michael Strelow
Grad. Student — English

Person the tables

In a recent memo I sent around to ASUO student programs, I asked if any of the Programs would be interested in "manning tables at the Oregon Preview Weekend."

I would like to publicly apologize for my unthinking use of the word "man" in such a context. Instead of "man" a table, I would like to ask programs to consider "personing" a table.

You can teach an old dog new tricks, although sometimes it ain't easy.

Michael Connelly
ASUO VP — Programs/
Community Affairs

Contact your legislators

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Rep. Mary Burrows	Republican	Phone 378-8865
Room H386, State Capitol,	Salem, Or.	97310
Rep. Dave Frohnmayer	Republican	Phone 378-8857
Room H377, State Capitol,	Salem, Or.	97310
Rep. Gratten Kerans	Democrat	Phone 378-8832
Room H291, State Capitol,	Salem, Or.	97310
Sen. George Wingard	Republican	Phone 378-8848
Room S312, State Capitol,	Salem, Or.	97310
Sen. Ed Fadeley	Democrat	Phone 378-8812
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